

WHAT IS COMMUNITY?



*Discovery Research:
a field guide for exploration &
cultural planning in your own backyard*



MAINE ARTS COMMISSION

building Maine communities through the arts



WHAT IS COMMUNITY?

A good place to begin to answer that question is to look at the word itself. It does not take long to notice it contains the same root as the phrase “in common” or shared. To a great

extent, community and culture relate to the things people share: ideas, places, ways of doing things, ways of looking at the world and experiences. This guide is about identifying the things we share with our neighbors.

Every place has its own sights and sounds, its own smells and cycles that condition the way we see the world and how we interact with our community. Over time, community members sift through those environmental elements and develop ways of integrating them into their lives. What makes sense in one community may not make sense in another. The things we see every day, the language we use, the way we earn our livings and the history of our shared experiences all influence us in a way that, added together, creates a community.

Most field guides are designed to help people identify the unfamiliar. This publication is different. It begins with what you already know – your own community – and encourages you to take a closer look. This guide provides exercises in observation and community organizing that are designed to help you assess and develop the artistic potential in your community.

This guide is meant to assist:



as a tool individuals can take home to learn more about their own communities



as a new way of working in communities to develop a wider audience for the arts



as a way of learning how local resources can assist community cultural development



Photos at left (starting at top and going clockwise): BATES MILL, LEWISTON; BRADBURY MOUNTAIN STATE PARK; PORTLAND PUBLIC MARKET; GRAND LAKE STREAM FOLK ART FESTIVAL.

Cover image:
OLD PORT FESTIVAL PARADE,
PORTLAND.

We are all shaped by place.

The places we grew up, the places we visit and the places we live influence who we are. Our relationship to place is close, complex and immediate. By paying attention to our associations with places, it becomes clear how individuals connect to larger communities.

Becoming conscious of the things we sense – the sights, sounds and smells of a local spot, the everyday comings and goings – helps to define a place.



DURING THEIR ANNUAL MEETING, MAINE PRESERVATION TOOK A GUIDED TOUR OF DOWNTOWN GARDINER, A DESIGNATED “MAIN STREET MAINE” COMMUNITY BY THE MAINE DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION.
(www.maine Preservation.org)
(www.gardinermainst.org)
(www.mdf.org)

- Alone or with a group, answer the following questions:
- What associations do you have with the place where you live?*
 - What are some of the important physical characteristics of that place?*
 - What smells and sounds are associated with the area?*
 - What places in the area hold special significance? Why?*
 - What local ways and values are connected with this place?*
 - Does your place have a name?*
 - Is there a story associated with that name?*
 - What are some of the other names for the area?*
 - What happened in the past in the area?*
 - What happened in the past among the group or groups of people who lived here?*
 - What is happening now?*

To discover a sense of community, first define and describe it.

Geographic boundaries.

Loosely define the area’s geographic boundaries. This will help to focus the discovery and research. For example, you may decide that the boundaries of your community are defined by the limits of:

- ☐ *your neighborhood*
- ☐ *a school district*
- ☐ *your city or town*
- ☐ *your county*
- ☐ *a set of cities and towns*
- ☐ *regional boundaries*



Photo: Toni Seger.



Conceptual boundaries.

When thinking about the boundaries of a locale or community, remember that there may be many ways to describe a place, some of which may be geographically consistent, while others may overlap or conflict. All definitions are valid as they reflect the many and varying ways that people experience place.

How is the place defined? Consider some of these physical boundaries;



OLD STONE WALL, NEW SHARON.

- ☐ voting precincts
- ☐ city or town limits
- ☐ county lines
- ☐ a council of governments
- ☐ reservation boundaries

*Is your place defined by administrative districts?
Some examples include:*

- ☐ police precincts
- ☐ water authorities
- ☐ state or national forests
- ☐ school districts

Is it useful to define your place by statistical districts such as:

- ☐ a group of census tracts or
- ☐ a Metropolitan Statistical Area, as defined by the United States Census Bureau

Try to define your place by the market areas of local businesses or organizations such as:

- ☐ the market area of the neighborhood “Mom and Pop” store
- ☐ the market area of the new super-discount store
- ☐ the service area of the local women’s shelter;
- ☐ the service area of the local hospital
- ☐ the market area of a local theatre company
- ☐ the distribution area of the local newspapers
- ☐ radio and television broadcast areas

*Is the place defined by major economic activities of the past or present? Name them.
Consider areas such as:*

- ☐ rail yards
- ☐ mining areas
- ☐ resort areas
- ☐ lumber camps
- ☐ factory districts
- ☐ retail districts
- ☐ colleges
- ☐ nightclub districts
- ☐ farmers’ markets
- ☐ wharves
- ☐ town commons

*Is your place defined by important natural features?
Some examples include:*

- ☐ waterfronts
- ☐ beaches
- ☐ a range of hills
- ☐ a river
- ☐ a valley
- ☐ bird flyways

When thinking about the boundaries of a locale or community, remember that there may be many ways to describe a place.



FIRE STATION, WESTBROOK.

Maps are also useful in defining a sense of place.

Maps may tell of political and legal boundaries and help you to understand the physical environment and how it has changed. Maps can also show population densities and land uses (agricultural, recreational, residential, industrial or commercial). Maps may remind us of historic places and events, they may advertise businesses, shopping malls or recreational opportunities. They may show us how to avoid obstacles and congestion. Maps may also give hints as to who lives in a place – their ethnicity, education, income

level or employment. Old maps may help to identify past events and land uses in an area. They may show how the area has grown, how roads have changed, where forests or wetlands stand or where culturally important buildings and sites once stood. They may help to identify the meanings of places that are still important to some residents, if not to the current mapmakers. You can probably find variety of maps, both current and historic, of your community. The local library, city or county planning office, tourist bureau, historical society, chamber of commerce and state and federal agencies can provide area maps on a variety of themes and scales. All of these maps can help provide a more complete picture of your community. Maps will also help in describing a place, as well as discovering a community’s resources.

Types of maps include:

- United States Geological Survey maps
- Department of Transportation maps
- soil and vegetation maps
- city, town or village street maps
- wildlife distribution maps
- nautical charts
- zoning maps
- deed maps
- insurance maps
- business maps
- maps of bus and train routes
- political ward maps
- tourist maps
- historic site maps
- cultural maps
- county road maps
- water resource maps

MAPPING THE WORKING COASTS WAS A PROJECT THAT MADE HUNDREDS OF MENTAL MAPS OF THE COAST OF MAINE.

Mental Maps.

Mental maps are personal expressions of an individual’s understanding of the structure of his or her environment. They are drawings of how an individual views the spatial organization of the world: locally, nationally or globally. Mental maps can be used to learn how people perceive their environment.

Each of us carries an internal map on which we inscribe the details of our daily lives.

As part of the Discovery Research process, community members can create maps showing their homes, neighborhoods, schools, downtowns and the places where they work, shop and play. Mental maps can enhance understanding and add to the list of cultural resources in your community. Comparing mental maps will help identify priority cultural resources. It may also help reveal and identify conflicts about the importance of certain places and cultural resources within a community.

Mental maps can be used to learn how people perceive their environment.



WHILE DRAWING A MENTAL MAP OF YOUR COMMUNITY, CONSIDER HOW TRADITIONS ARE PASSED FROM ONE GENERATION TO ANOTHER, SUCH AS THIS CURBSIDE LESSON IN NORWAY.

Beyond Geography.

One of the things you will discover while exploring your community is that communities are much more than lines drawn on maps. They are often rooted in common interests: occupational, intellectual or otherwise. A good example is the Deaf community, which exists within the larger community but has its own language for communicating, its own culture and its own traditions. Every community contains smaller groups embedded within the larger culture. A community is not so much a melting pot but an orchestra,

with different groups contributing different sounds, sometimes in harmony and sometimes in dissonance

Place has a very strong cultural impact. However, there are other forces that influence culture as well. People often belong to communities that are not easily defined by physical boundaries. For example, an occupational group, such as boat makers, is a community of people with similar interests and experiences. While exploring your community, think about the people you interact with frequently who have influenced you.



PETER WALLACE IS A CANOE BUILDER AT NORTHWOODS CANOE IN ATKINSON.

Who has influenced you the most?

What is their relationship to you?

What have they taught you?

Why is what they taught you important?

How did that person learn what they taught you?

Why is it valuable knowledge?

Is there a story about the history of your cultural, professional or community group?

How do you identify other members of that group?

Creating a Cultural Inventory.

Inventories and descriptions of local practices help us discover what people consider important in their communities. A successful cultural inventory involves as many people as possible. When creating a local cultural inventory, consider these categories and involve local experts (even if they do not call themselves experts) in such areas as:

- ☐ *community and family histories*
- ☐ *legends about places, people and events*
- ☐ *humorous stories and ghost stories*
- ☐ *stories about local occupations*
- ☐ *testimonies and sermons*
- ☐ *occupational skills*
- ☐ *creative writing*
- ☐ *vocal and instrumental music*
- ☐ *instrument making*
- ☐ *dance and theatre*
- ☐ *tatting, embroidery, quilting and other textile arts and crafts*
- ☐ *painting*
- ☐ *calligraphy*
- ☐ *basketmaking*
- ☐ *pottery*
- ☐ *jewelry making*
- ☐ *wood carving*
- ☐ *yard and garden design and decoration*
- ☐ *wall and fence making*
- ☐ *plant, animal and weather lore*
- ☐ *sail making, boat building and maritime knowledge*
- ☐ *guiding, trapping, fishing, hunting and fly-tying*
- ☐ *wreathmaking*
- ☐ *farming*
- ☐ *cooking, baking, canning and curing*
- ☐ *home remedy preparation*



MARY MITCHELL GABRIEL (1908-2004) WAS A TRADITIONAL WABANAKI BASKETMAKER.
Photo: Bob DeLong/Bangor Daily News.

Local Cultural Expressions are also Wayfinders.

Up north, where leaves do not appear on the trees until May, a common portent of spring is fiddlehead ferns being sold at roadside stands. Many people who have endured a long Maine winter appreciate the chance to cook this tangy vegetable. Day-to-day activities, whether they are cooking wild greens, mooring a boat, tilling a garden or sharpening skates, all tie people to place and are closely linked to a region's culture and values. The preservation of local skills depends upon participation in and

appreciation of local knowledge. Where local culture is woven into a pattern of daily living, activities may not be thought of as “cultural.” In turn, practitioners of these cultural traditions may not think of themselves as artists or experts. Although they may not know it, these people are the keepers of local culture. By virtue of their sharp memories or special talents, they have much to share.

The way people identify community members can indicate expertise. When working on a cultural assessment, Rangeley residents created an inventory of good storytellers and people knowledgeable about guiding, logging and local history. These lists helped indicate key cultural resources, as well as the types of activities of interest to community members.

*Where local culture
is woven into a
pattern of daily
living, activities may
not be thought of as
“cultural.”*



EDMOND THERIAULT MAKING SNOWSHOES
IN MADAWASKA.

Often a geographic community is made up of many smaller communities. A single community may contain cultural enclaves. In 1870, Swedish settlers colonized an agricultural settlement in Maine's Aroostook County. They left their cultural footprints on the area that is now New Sweden. Historically, Lewiston/Auburn included Franco- and Irish-American communities. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, Quebec's farmers of French heritage began moving to Lewiston and Auburn to work in textile mills and shoe factories. The Franco-American millworkers settled in an area of Lewiston now known as “Little Canada.” They followed the Irish laborers who built the canal in Lewiston. The canal made the mills possible, which in turn attracted the millworkers.

Sometimes neighborhoods become home to succeeding layers of communities. While the textile mills in Lewiston once attracted Irish laborers and French millworkers, Somali immigrants have more recently settled in Lewiston and added a new layer to the neighborhood that was once called “Little Canada.” Other cultural groups have also found homes in Maine, including Sudanese and Cambodian communities in Portland and a Latino community in Milbridge.

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once attracted Irish laborers
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LEWISTON RESIDENTS TAKE A PHOTOGRAPH TO CAPTURE
THE OPENING DAY OF THE RED SEA RESTAURANT.

Local Culture Connects People with Place.

Discovering the connections that create a community requires us to become aware of the relationships between art, culture, language, behavior and occupation. Cultural anthropologist Mary Catherine Bateson calls this using “peripheral vision.” It applies not only to perceptions of community life but also to perceptions of local culture.



GRAND LAKE STREAM FOLK ART FESTIVAL.

In uncovering the cultural life of your community, you must consider the patterns and relationships that make individuals part of larger groups and events: teams, clubs, families, volunteer organizations and ethnic, tribal, religious or occupational groups. It is through these relationships that people develop a sense of continuing membership in their communities

Everyone has several identities which may include religious, political and occupational affiliations, as well as cultural and geographic ties. Learning to recognize these multiple identities is one of the benefits of cultural assessment and development.

As part of a cultural inventorying process, individuals can list all of their identities or roles within a community.

Discovery Research.

A Discovery Research project is one way of seeing the connection between people, place and local life. It is also a way of bringing local culture to light.

Discovery Research is a process by which community members are interviewed for information on local cultural expressions, including local events, history, performance, art, crafts, lore and work skills. The process collects information about cultural activities, explores connections within the community and organizes cultural events around those connections.

The most important step in a Discovery Research project is to include as many community members as possible: artists, art organizations, elected officials, civic and social service organizations, educators, students, members of occupational groups, senior citizens, religious leaders and others. It is useful to hold both one-on-one interviews with local experts on specific subjects and more general discussions with larger groups.

A Discovery Research project is one way of seeing the connection between people, place and local life.



BRUCE HAZARD, DIRECTOR OF MOUNTAIN COUNTIES HERITAGE, TAKING NOTES AT A DISCOVERY RESEARCH MEETING IN RUMFORD.

❖ Learn about the key social and economic conditions of your community.

Research existing comprehensive plans and census reports at your town office or planning department. Identify key individuals who know the community well – people who are familiar with local conditions and history, and who can provide a wide range of perspectives on local issues. Include people who have varied or conflicting viewpoints. Below is a list of suggestions and questions to consider.



GENERATIONS OF MAINE RESIDENTS HAVE BEEN EMPLOYED IN TEXTILE MANUFACTURING, SUCH AS THIS EMPLOYEE AT BRAHMS/MOUNT TEXTILES IN HALLOWELL. BE SURE TO INCLUDE OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION IN YOUR RESEARCH.

What is the racial and ethnic composition of the community?

What is the age distribution of your community?

Are there large numbers of very young or elderly people?

What is the educational profile of the community?

What are the major occupations and economic activities of the community?

How has the economic climate of the community changed over the past 10 to 20 years?

Which industries are growing and which are not?

What new industries are coming to the community, which are leaving and why?

What are the key economic issues facing the community?

What are some of the most important social issues in the community?

What key social changes have occurred in the community over the past 10 to 20 years?

How have these changes affected local culture?

How might cultural resources address social problems and change in the community?

❖ Read local history.

If you have lived in your community for a long time, you probably know more than you think. Look for reports on local cultural fieldwork at your local library, the Maine Folklife Center at the University of Maine in Orono or the Maine State Library in Augusta. Below are some initial questions to ask people about the local history.

How much of the history of the area do you know?

What arts and cultural organizations are in the area?

What religious holidays are celebrated in the community?

What does your community need in order to promote and preserve its cultural heritage?

❖ Attend local festivals, celebrations, church suppers and auctions. Hang out at parks, boat docks and coffee shops.

❖ Read local newspapers and listen to local radio stations.

*For an effective
Discovery
Research project,
consider the steps
listed on these pages.*



LIBRARIES, SUCH AS THE GARDINER PUBLIC LIBRARY SHOWN HERE, ARE GREAT PLACES TO FIND INFORMATION ABOUT COMMUNITY HISTORY. (Use MaineLibraries.com to locate libraries of all types.)

❖ Ask questions about your community.

There are a variety of approaches, including one-on-one interviewing by phone or in person, team interviewing, town meetings and open forums on specific topics. During the interviews and meetings, someone should take notes or minutes with the goal of summarizing key information. These interview sessions might also be a good time to do a mental mapping exercise.



SAKAL MEAS AND SARAN MAO REHEARSE TRADITIONAL CAMBODIAN MUSIC, UNDER THE DIRECTION OF PIRUN SEN, DURING A SATURDAY MORNING SESSION AT THE PORTLAND SCHOOLS' MULTICULTURAL CENTER.

Most likely, the end product will not be an exhaustive study of culture in the community. Rather, think of the work as a sampling of local activities that will uncover some of the more pressing needs and interests in your community. Hand out a signup sheet for names, addresses, phone numbers and areas of interest for future one-on-one interviews.

The following questions are useful for beginning each interview session.

What comes to mind when you think of the cultural life of your community?

What kind of reputation do you think your community's cultural offerings has locally? In neighboring towns? In the region? Among visitors?

What do you consider to be the most pressing cultural issues facing your community?

Depending on the expertise of the person being interviewed, consider these topics and sample questions:

❖ Local culture.

What do you know about the history of the area?

How do you see yourself fitting into that history?

Who knows the most about local history?

What types of things do they know?

What is needed in your community to promote and preserve its cultural heritage?

❖ Cultural organizations.

What arts organizations exist locally?

What types of programs do they offer?

Whom do they serve?

What are some of the organizations' most pressing needs?

What facilities are available for cultural programming?



THE PENNACOOK ART CENTER OPENED ON RUMFORD'S MAIN STREET IN JUNE 2004.
Photo by Abbey Casas Rice/The Rumford Falls Times.

🏠 Ethnic Heritage.

What are some activities or organizations that are important in your ethnic community?

Do you belong to any clubs or cultural organizations?

Where do you meet?

What religious holidays are most significant for your ethnic group? Why?

How do you celebrate?

Do you know any special stories for the holidays?

What do you do for special observances like dances, birthdays, weddings, christenings, funerals, graduations and family reunions?

What barriers have prevented you, your family or group from expressing yourselves culturally?

How could those barriers be overcome or addressed?



OSCAR MOKEME TEACHES TRADITIONAL IGBO NIGERIAN MUSIC TO HIS SON OBI AT THE MUSEUM OF AFRICAN TRIBAL ART IN PORTLAND.

🏠 Occupations.

Do you work in the same neighborhood that you live in?

Describe some of the local businesses in your area.

How do you earn a living?

How long have you been engaged in that work?

What are the future prospects for that work?

How did you learn?

*Is your work part of a family business?
How many generations of your family have been involved?*

Do you belong to any work-related clubs or associations?

Do these groups have cultural or recreational activities?

Do you participate in any recreational activities associated with work?



LOCALLY-OWNED BUSINESSES, SUCH AS SLATES BAKERY IN HALLOWELL, ARE MEETING PLACES THAT HELP TO SHAPE COMMUNITIES.

*Depending on the expertise
of the person being
interviewed, consider these
topics and questions.*



THE CHILDREN'S THEATRE OF MAINE FROM PORTLAND PROVIDES ARTS EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN AND TRAVELS TO SCHOOLS TO PERFORM PLAYS SUCH AS *STELLALUNA*, SHOWN HERE. (www.childrenstheatre.biz)

📌 Artists.

Who are the artists living in your community?

What kind of art do they make – musical, performing, visual, literary, crafts?

How are they involved in the community or in cultural programming?

What are their needs?

Are there places where they can perform or display their work?

Are they involved with local schools, the local library or seniors' centers?

📌 Arts in Education.

What types of arts in education programs exist in your community?

Which schools offer artist-in-residence programs? Who coordinates them?

Are music, drama, dance and visual arts classes offered in your school? How often?

Does your school offer advanced levels of study in artistic disciplines?

How is the parent-teacher organization involved in the arts?

Who in your community offers private lessons in the arts?

Do artists in the community work in local schools? Who are they?

What is needed to further arts education in your community?

Sharing.

As information from the research unfolds, it will become clear how complex and multifaceted the cultural activities of your community really are. A profile of the community will emerge. The results of the Discovery Research project can be shared through:

- 📌 an oral presentation of the findings by people who participated in the research
- 📌 a slide show
- 📌 a series of talks or community meetings
- 📌 a printed cultural directory
- 📌 a website
- 📌 a CD-ROM

The Discovery Research process may make people more aware, more engaged and better informed about their community's cultural life and potential.



THE MAINE CULTURAL NETWORK'S WEBSITE LISTS THOUSANDS OF MAINE'S CULTURAL RESOURCES. (www.MaineCulture.org)

Community Profile.

A community profile can include the following information:

- an introduction, summarizing the Discovery Research project findings
- a summary of community history, including recent demographics
- a description of the current economic and social conditions in the community, as well as the local political environment
- a description of the place, including landscapes and neighborhoods
- an inventory of artists, local experts, cultural organizations, groups, events and expressions
- a list of the community's needs with regard to cultural development and preservation
- recommendations for how to meet those needs



BEALS ISLAND.

Writing a community profile can help to clarify the community's needs and resources. It can also become an idea bank for cultural programming grounded in local culture. The findings can be used to develop innovative programs that highlight aspects of the community's life. Examples of such programs are listed below.

Educational programs – which present local culture at the community's schools.

Community celebrations – organizers of local festivals, holiday events, county fairs and farmers' markets may be interested in showcasing local artists or themes related to their events.

Family programs – a library, museum, church, seniors' center or community center may like to present a local artist or discussion of topics of local interest.

Intergenerational programs – seniors' centers, hospitals, schools, community centers or historical societies may develop programs that involve seniors, children and young adults.

Workplace programs – programs related to occupational history in the community may be presented at workplaces. Local artists might visit workplaces during lunch breaks.

Outdoor public art – exhibitions of public art may develop in places such as public buildings and schools, wooded areas, store windows, parking lots and grocery stores.

Performances and plays – communities may choose to sponsor stage presentations that call attention to local culture, local places and local histories.



FARMERS' MARKETS ARE PART OF THE CULTURAL FABRIC OF SOME COMMUNITIES, AS AT THE DEERING OAKS FARMERS' MARKET IN PORTLAND.

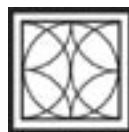
(Use getrealmaine.com to locate Maine farmers' markets.)

Building On Your Discoveries.

Gathering information about the community is just the beginning. Once compiled, the information can be used to create new initiatives to celebrate the community's culture. In addition to serving as the basis for new cultural programs, the discoveries can act as a catalyst for cultural development. Such work can have many benefits: cultural organizations will know better how to serve the needs of the whole community, new partnerships will be formed, local artists may be recognized and included in cultural programming, and schools will be able to strengthen local cultural education.

The Discovery Research process may make people more aware, more engaged and better informed about their community's cultural life and potential. Through new cultural programs that are relevant to local concerns and reflect different aspects of the community's aesthetic sensibilities, new audiences and participants may emerge. This is an alternative to importing culture "from away." Rather, it is an integrated approach guided by local cultural perspectives. For more information about building cultural programs from Discovery Research work, please contact the Maine Arts Commission's community arts & traditional arts associate at 207/287-8647.

*In-depth case studies
and a complete bibliography
that accompany this booklet
are available at:*



MAINEARTS.com

www.mainearts.com/news/online_pub.shtml



DRAGON SLIDE MADE OF SNOW,
MAINE WINTERFEST, FALMOUTH.
(Photo courtesy Maine Winterfest,
www.mainewinterfest.com.)

Cultural Discovery & Planning Projects Around Maine.

Many Maine communities have undertaken cultural discovery and planning projects.

In 1994, the Maine Arts Commission was invited to work with the cities of Lewiston and Auburn to help develop a community-based cultural assessment and planning initiative. When Lewiston/Auburn was a major textile and shoe-making center, almost 70 percent of the community's workforce worked in the mills. Of that percentage, close to half were French-speaking immigrants from Quebec. Today these industries employ fewer than 1,000 people and account for only eight percent of the local workforce. Between 1984 and 1991, 30 percent of the manufacturing jobs in the area were lost.

Two major challenges emerged after the loss of the community's traditional industries; adaptively reusing nearly six million square feet of empty mill space and revitalizing a depressed downtown area that was once a major mercantile district. In an attempt to deal with these issues, Lewiston/Auburn added a cultural component as an integral part of its comprehensive plan and undertook a Discovery Research project. Local planning groups were formed to explore topics identified in a preliminary public meeting: arts-in-education, cultural organizations, cultural facilities and individual artists.

Through a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts' Folk & Traditional Arts Program, a French-speaking cultural specialist inventoried the artists and art forms of the local Franco-American community. Members of Lewiston/Auburn's 14 largest ethnic populations participated in cultural focus groups. Members of each group talked about what they considered their significant cultural expressions and discussed how their cultural heritage might be recognized and celebrated in the cities' overall cultural landscape. The findings were presented in a public forum, at which point a core group of participants agreed to draft a cultural plan for Lewiston/Auburn.

The results of these efforts have been far-reaching. The cultural plan is expected to be adopted as part of both cities' comprehensive plan. Maine's first local arts agency, L/A Arts, was established as a result of the Discovery Research project, as was an artists' group called Artists of the Androscoggin. Since the Discovery Research process, there has also been an increase in cultural activities of the Franco-American community in Lewiston and Auburn.

There are many more examples of successful cultural discovery and planning projects in Maine. To learn more about cultural planning and research in Maine, and to link to other online resources about cultural planning and discovery, please visit www.MaineArts.com.

WHAT IS COMMUNITY?



MAINEARTS.com

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Maine Arts Commission Mission

The Maine Arts Commission shall encourage and stimulate public interest and participation in the cultural heritage and programs of our state; shall encourage and assist freedom of artistic expression for the well being of the arts; to meet the legitimate needs and aspirations of persons in all parts of the state.



NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE ARTS